

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY E:AOCARY:LVS

APPROVED BY E:DHWOOD

S/S- MR. ORTIZ

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O 061435Z OCT 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 237336

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS2

TAGS: ENRG, ETRD, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET GRAIN CROP

FOR UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON.

1. FOLLOWING IS REVISED CIA ESTIMATE OF SOVIET GRAIN CROP.  
BEGIN QUOTE. THE SOVIET GRAIN CROP IN 1975 MAY BE 5 TO 15  
MILLION TONS LESS THAN OUR EARLIER ESTIMATE OF 170 MILLION  
TONS. INDICATIONS OF WIDESPREAD USE OF UNRIPENED GRAIN FOR  
FORAGE PURPOSES, ABANDONMENT OF OTHER LOW-YIELDING ACREAGE,  
AND LOWER THAN EXPECTED YIELDS IN THE EUROPEAN USSR  
(INCLUDING THE UKRAINE) LEAD US TO REVISE OUR EARLIER  
ESTIMATE SHARPLY DOWNWARD.

WITH THE HARVEST RAPIDLY COMING TO A CLOSE, IT APPEARS  
THAT 30 TO 40 MILLION ACRES OUT OF A TOTAL SOWN ACREAGE OF  
325 MILLION ACRES WILL NOT BE HARVESTED AS MATURE GRAIN.  
THE LOSS OF PASTURES AND FORAGE CROPS BECAUSE OF DROUGHT  
APPARENTLY LED TO LIVESTOCK GRAZING OR CUTTING FOR GREEN  
FEED OF MASSIVE ACREAGE OF IMMATURE GRAIN.  
THE WIDE RANGE IN OUR REVISED ESTIMATE OF 155 TO 165

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MILLION TONS REFLECTS THE UNDERTAINTY CONCERNING THE YIELDS

ON THIS UNHARVESTED ACREAGE.

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SO FAR, THE SOVIETS HAVE PURCHASED ABOUT 20 MILLION TONS OF FOREIGN GRAIN. A CROP OF 160 MILLION TONS WOULD LEAVE MOSCOW STILL ROUGHLY 32 MILLION TONS BELOW REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS FISCAL YEAR, EVEN ALLOWING FOR STOCK DRAWDOWNS TO A MINIMAL LEVEL.

THE SOVIETS CANNOT HOPE TO PURCHASE THAT MUCH ADDITIONAL GRAIN AND ARE TAKING DRASTIC STEPS AT HOME TO COPE WITH THE EXPECTED SHORTFALL. OFFICIAL DATA ON MEAT PRODUCTION AND LIVESTOCK INVENTORIES IN AUGUST CONFIRM THAT DISTRESS SLAUGHTERING HAS BEGUN.

MEAT PRODUCTION WAS A RECORD 11 PERCENT HIGHER THAN A YEAR AGO AND INVENTORIES OF HOGS, SHEEP, AND POULTRY HAD DROPPED. THERE HAS BEEN AN ABOVE-AVERAGE SLAUGHTER OF HOGS, REDUCING NUMBERS BY 3 MILLION HEAD IN THE SOCIALIZED SECTOR, 6 PERCENT BELOW A YEAR EARLIER. HOGS ARE HEAVY CONSUMERS OF FEED GRAINS. FURTHER LARGE-SCALE DISTRESS SLAUGHTERING APPEARS LIKELY. END QUOTE.

2. USDA IS ALSO DOWNWARDLY REVISING THEIR ESTIMATES, BUT FIGURES ARE UNAVAILABLE AT THIS TIME. KISSINGER

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